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C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 000526

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [QA](#)
SUBJECT: QATAR TO DONATE \$10 MILLION TO GAZA THROUGH HAMAS

REF: 2008 DOHA 861

Classified By: CDA Mirembe L. Nantongo for Reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

(SBU) KEY POINTS

-- Local media reported that Qatar's Amir, Shaykh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, called Hamas' Ismail Haniyah August 21 to inform him that Qatar would mark the beginning of Ramadan by donating 10 million USD to Gaza's fishermen and workers.

-- According to press reports, the assistance will be funneled through Hamas.

-- Embassy contacts have no additional details to offer.

-- We will report septel any additional information acquired on the nature and funding mechanisms for this aid.

(C) COMMENTS

-- It is unclear what prompted Qatar to funnel assistance through Hamas.

-- The choice to provide assistance through Hamas would mark a change in stated GOQ policy, as previously Qatar's assistance to Gaza was distributed through UN organizations and NGOs -- mechanisms which Minister of State for International Cooperation Khalid Al-Attiah told Ambassador last December Qatar found satisfactory (reftel).

End Key Points and Comments.

¶1. (U) Local media reported August 23 that Amir Shaykh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani called Hamas official Ismail Haniyah the evening of August 21 to inform him that Qatar would donate 10 million USD at the start of Muslim holy month of Ramadan to aid Gazan fishermen and workers. According to the local Arabic-language newspaper Al Sharq and China's Xinhua News Agency, the assistance would be funneled through Hamas.

¶2. (U) The aid is aimed at helping the tens of thousands of workers and fisherman affected by restrictions imposed by the Israeli Navy on navigation near the coast of Gaza, reported Al Sharq.

¶3. (U) The Palestinian Mission in Qatar issued a statement August 22 lauding Qatar's gesture, calling it a "life buoy from slow death." In a separate press release to a local news agency, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Abdul Rahman bin Hamad Al-Attiah embraced the Amir's announcement, praising Qatar for its steadfast support of the Palestinian people. (Note: Al-Attiah, himself Qatari, is a member of one of Qatar's most prominent families.)

¶4. (SBU) Our repeated attempts to garner more information from Qatari and local Palestinian sources on the nature of

the aid and the distribution mechanisms through which it would pass have been unsuccessful. Post will report septel any additional information obtained.
Nantongo